



November 16, 2004

Mr. John T. Kelly, Park Planner
Acadia National Park
P.O. Box 177
Bar Harbor, ME 04609

Dear John:

As chairman of the Acadia National Park Advisory Commission and after review of this letter by my fellow commissioners, I submit the following comments of the Commission in response to the Draft Schoodic General Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement.

The Advisory Commission commends you and your National Park Service colleagues for a thorough analysis of the environmental impacts of converting the former Navy base on Schoodic Point to the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC). You have analyzed the impacts of the three alternative courses of action upon the natural resources, the cultural resources, and the experience of visitors to the Schoodic District of Acadia National Park. We find the analysis comprehensive and satisfactory. It convinces us that all three alternatives are consistent with Acadia National Park's mission and its environmental goals for Schoodic, namely to manage the Schoodic District for low-density recreation and solitude in an area where natural resources and ecological processes are conserved and protected.

The stated reasons for choosing Alternative C as the preferred alternative are sound, and we concur that Alternative C should be the preferred alternative. It satisfies the intent of Congress in transferring the Navy facilities to the National Park Service; it makes effective public use of those facilities; it enables much more broadly beneficial use of the facilities than Alternative B at only a little more cost to the National Park Service; and it provides significant and needed economic benefits to the local communities to offset the economic losses caused by the Navy's departure.

The Commission does wish to emphasize strongly that the National Park Service must prevent the costs of operating SERC in terms of dollars and staff time from negatively impacting any other aspects of the operation of Acadia National Park. In these particularly difficult financial times for Acadia National Park, when the Park is having to cut visitor services and maintenance to an alarming degree, SERC must not be allowed to compromise the ability of the Park to carry out its mission fully and properly throughout all its properties on the Schoodic peninsula, on Mount Desert Island, and on Isle au Haut. The Commission will ask the Maine Congressional

Office of the President
105 Eden Street, Bar Harbor, Maine 04609 • 207 288 5915 • 207 288 1780 www.cota.edu

Response:

The preferred alternative of the Schoodic DGMPA/EIS (Alternative C: Collaborative Management) directs the NPS to develop and operate the Schoodic Education and Research Center in cooperation with a nonprofit organization. The NPS anticipates that the nonprofit organization will be a source of funding and means of cost-savings, which would relieve the NPS of having to fund the entire cost of the Schoodic Education and Research Center.

The Schoodic Education and Research Center is one of 16 research learning centers nationwide that the NPS has established to further its mission. The intent of the Schoodic Education and Research Center is to enhance the management and understanding of park resources and share knowledge about the park with the public and science community. The NPS will continue to brief the Advisory Commission and seek its input on the development and operation of the Schoodic Education and Research Center, and will provide an annual report on its financial status.

The Schoodic DGMPA/EIS emphasizes the need to retain the relatively quiet nature of the Schoodic District and includes specific management actions to minimize the impact of motor vehicles on park resources and values.

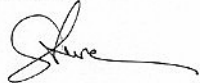
Thank you for your comments.

Delegation and the Department of the Interior to ensure that funding for SERC does not now or in the future decrease funding for the other needs of Acadia National Park. Further, the Commission asks the Superintendent of Acadia National Park to review at least annually with the Commission the overall financial and staff impacts of SERC on Acadia National Park.

The Commission has noted the concern expressed in the joint public statement of Schoodic Futures and Friends of Schoodic regarding traffic. While it seems unlikely that the traffic created by SERC would be as great as that experienced when the Naval Station was at full operations, we nevertheless encourage the National Park Service to manage vehicular traffic carefully so that it does not create more negative environmental impacts than anticipated in the Environmental Impact Statement.

The Commission appreciates this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steven K. Katona, Chairman
Acadia National Park Advisory Commission

cc: Sheridan Steele, Superintendent, ANP



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 1
1 CONGRESS STREET, SUITE 1100
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02114-2023

OFFICE OF THE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

November 23, 2004

John T. Kelly, Park Planner
Acadia National Park
P.O. Box 177
Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

Re: Draft General Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement for the
Schoolic District of Acadia National Park (EPA ERP # NPS-B65012-ME)

Dear Mr. Kelly:

In accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and
Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, we have reviewed the Draft General Management Plan
Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement (DGMPA/EIS) for the Schoolic District of
Acadia National Park on the Schoolic Peninsula in Maine.

Based on our review of the DGMPA/EIS we have no objections to the project as described and
we rate this EIS "LO-1 - Lack of Objections-Adequate" in accordance with EPA's national
rating system, a description of which is attached to this letter.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this DEIS. Please feel free to contact me or
Timothy Timmermann at 617/918-1025 if you wish to discuss these comments further.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth A. Higgins
Director, Office of Environmental Review

Attachment

Response:

Thank you for your comments.



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
55 CAPITOL STREET
65 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333

EARLE G. SHETTLEWORTH, JR.
DIRECTOR

October 21, 2004

Lee Terzis
Cultural Resources Program Manager
Acadia National Park
P.O. Box 177
Bar Harbor, ME 04609

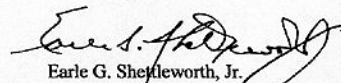
Subject: MHPC #2229-04 - *Draft General Management Plan*; Schoodic
Town: Winter Harbor, ME

Dear Ms. Terzis:

In response to your recent request, I have reviewed the above referenced document pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

I concur with the findings regarding cultural resources, as stated in the *Draft General Management Plan* for the Schoodic Peninsula, and find it acceptable in all respects. I have no further comments or suggestions at this time. Please contact Mike Johnson of my staff if we can be of further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,


Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.
State Historic Preservation Officer

EGS/mj

PHONE: (207) 287-2132



FAX: (207) 287-2335

Response:

Thank you for your comments.



Town of Winter Harbor

P. O. Box 98
Winter Harbor, Maine 04693-0098
Tel. (207) 963-2235
FAX (207) 963-2140
E-mail: winterharbor@downeast.net

November 4, 2004

From: Winter Harbor Board of Selectmen

To: Mr. John T. Kelly
Planner, Acadia National Park
P.O. Box 177
Bar Harbor, ME 04609

Subj: Comments on Schoodic District General Management Plan

Dear Mr. Kelly,

The Town of Winter Harbor endorses Option "C", the Collaborative Management approach that relies on collaborative partnerships among the park and other entities designed to promote broad-based research and education.

The Town of Winter Harbor has a long-standing relationship with the Schoodic District and is very interested in supporting future activities on the former naval facility. We look forward to working with the Acadia Partners for Science and Learning Board of Directors and appreciate the opportunity to have a member on the board.

The State Planning Office recently determined that the Winter Harbor Comprehensive Plan is consistent with state guidelines. The Plan is scheduled for a second public hearing followed by a Special Town Meeting vote on 28 October 2004. One of the recommendations in the Plan is to establish a Rural Conservation District that would encompass property that lies within and adjacent to Acadia National Park. While zoning of federal land is only advisory, we believe that it is important to have Park properties zoned to facilitate municipal input into Park decisions. The Comprehensive Plan also must stipulate what the town wants for federal properties. This will make future negotiations with federal agencies easier in the event of a change in ownership.

The Rural Conservation District contains relatively restrictive land use standards. National Park related activities such as information, an education and research center and park concessions are permitted. The proposed District also is important to preserve the scenic character of Route 186, a designated scenic byway.

The Town is currently updating the Subdivision Ordinance originally adopted in 1981 and amended in 1990 and 2002. This update provides substantial protections for the Town while allowing the Planning Board flexibility concerning minor subdivisions. A copy is available for your review and comment. The following schedule is proposed for

Response:

The Schoodic DGMPE/EIS includes the objectives of working cooperatively with neighboring jurisdictions on land use issues, and participating in their land use planning and regulatory processes. The NPS looks forward to working with the Town of Winter Harbor on issues of mutual concern.

Thank you for your comments.

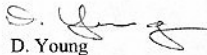
the public review of the Ordinance:

19 October--Planning Board approval

9 November--First Public Hearing

14 December--Second Public Hearing and Special Town Meeting

The Draft Subdivision Ordinance contains several sections keyed to preserving the natural and scenic features of the area. If approved at Town Meeting, the Subdivision Ordinance will have a retroactive effective date of 19 October, 2004.


D. Young
Chair

Cc:
Winter Harbor Town Manager
Winter Harbor Planning Board

Friends of **ACADIA**

Sheridan Steele
Superintendent
Acadia National Park
P.O. Box 177
Bar Harbor, ME 04609

RECEIVED November 15, 2004
Acadia National Park
Route and Initial



43 COTTAGE STREET
R.O. BOX 45
BAR HARBOR
MAINE 04609
207 288-3340
207 288-8938 FAX
friendsofacadia.org

Dear Sheridan:

I am pleased to submit Friends of Acadia's comments on the draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Schoodic district of Acadia National Park. We support the Park's plans to develop a research and education center at the site, and we think that Alternative C, the Collaborative Management Alternative, is the best option for managing the facility.

Friends of Acadia prefers Alternative C because we believe that it will maximize thoughtful re-use of the Navy facilities to improve educational offerings and to foster research activities at the learning center. Alternative A falls short because the Navy buildings would be maintained without proposed uses. While Alternative B broadens the scope of program offerings, it relies too heavily on the National Park Service to manage the Schoodic Education and Research Center (SERC), rather than building partnerships to bring additional resources to SERC's programs and facilities. Given recent Congressional funding shortfalls, it is unlikely that the National Park Service would ever receive sufficient funding to cover the scope of planned activities without the assistance of private partners.

In order to ensure that Park values and priorities are protected, Friends of Acadia encourages the Park Service to maintain strong agreements with the new non-profit that will manage the Schoodic facilities. Acadia National Park has an excellent history of partnerships, and the agreements that have been used on the carriage road and trails restoration projects, among other programs, have been particularly important, especially where financial transactions are concerned.

Friends of Acadia strongly supports the management goal, common to all three alternatives, of maintaining Schoodic as a quiet place of discovery and enjoyment of nature. The organization also supports removal of buildings and restoration of grounds that after a reasonable period of time are deemed not necessary to SERC or Park operations. Friends also strongly encourages the Park to replace the water tower with a ground level tank that will not be visible outside the Park.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions about this letter, feel free to contact me at stephanie@friendsofacadia.org or 288-3340.

Sincerely,

Stephanie M. Clement
Conservation Director

cc: W. Kent Olson, President
Dirk Faegre
Bill Zoellick

Response:

The NPS would enter into a cooperative agreement and/or lease with a nonprofit organization to develop and manage the Schoodic Education and Research Center. The cooperative agreement and/or lease would describe the respective roles and responsibilities of the NPS and nonprofit organization, and ensure that the development and use of the Schoodic Education and Research Center do not detract from the visitor experience or cause unacceptable impacts to park resources or values.

The Schoodic DGMPA/EIS includes the objective of maintaining opportunities for low-density recreation and solitude in the Schoodic District under all alternatives. The preferred alternative of the Schoodic DGMPA/EIS (Alternative C: Collaborative Management) directs the NPS to remove buildings that do not have an appropriate and viable reuse, and to evaluate the option of replacing the water tower with a ground-level storage tank.

Thank you for your comments.